



A private sector Agro-Enterprises advice and assistance service  
to stimulate the successful development of agro-products, enterprises  
and export markets in Sri Lanka.

## **Floriculture Consultancy**

### **Follow-Up**

**November/December 1993**

**Prepared by:**

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## **Floriculture Consultancy Follow Up**

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### **Consultancy Details**

Grants Written and Signed: 4

Grants in Preparation and Costing: 19

Client Visits: 13 (Nov 26 thru Dec 9)

New Clients: 6

Meetings with Potential Importers: 17

Meetings with Environmental NGO: 1

Meetings with Interested Joint Ventures: 6

### **Introduction**

This consultancy visit is the second phase of the AgEnt assistance to the Floriculture sector in Sri Lanka. This term of the consultancy has resulted in increased exporter activities in new market sectors and product diversity.

Nineteen Grant Agreements are in process ranging from small scale to extensive high-tech assistance. The majority of these Grant Agreements are for long range sustainable quality production enhancement and new plant varieties for the industry.

### **Shade Cloth Grant Agreements**

One grant agreement signed with Greenet and one in process with Thranga. Ultra-violet stabilized polypropylene knitted and woven shade coverings provide Sri Lankan floriculture producers with uniform growing environments. Consistent product quality is paramount to successful importer relations and the AgEnt project support for this product will enable floriculture producers to compete under more stable environmental grow-out conditions.

The discerning importer cannot tolerate fluctuations that typically accompany natural shade grown plant materials. Specifications for exact millimeter in sizes and caliper are not unusual requests and must be accomplished by the Sri Lankan growers if the increases in export margins are to be realized. Several Grant Agreements are in process to include this new growing component.

### **Polyethylene Growing Containers**

One Grant Agreement is in process for the purpose of fortifying the AgEnt client with the necessary finished containers to expand his normal field of market area.

Resistance to Sri Lankan floriculture production has clearly been documented to include the need of pre-finished and finished plant inventories. Ninety five percent of Sri Lankan floriculture exports have been confined to unrooted, rooted and net pot configurations. This new U.S. container technology is unavailable in Sri Lanka and therefore the market results will enable this sector to better determine future channels for growth and potential product diversity.

#### **Water Powered Fertilizer Injectors**

One Grant Agreement is under consideration for enhanced product quality by way of constant liquid feeding. Incorporating a high tech water powered injector enables growers to calibrate in exact p.p.m. any desired fertilizer concentrations they've determined necessary. A dual concentrate can also be incorporated to perform multiple injection requirements.

This high-technology injection is a step toward future growing practices. Until now virtually all fertilization requirements have been accomplished through the use of organic amendments while tolerating fluctuations in supply and varying concentrations.

#### **Low-Flow Irrigation Technology Grants**

Findings of certain bacterial and fungal diseases have been traced to canopy saturated irrigation methods. Three Grant Agreements have been written to provide alternate irrigation processes which eliminate the continuation and spread of these diseases.

These pilot irrigation systems also aid in regimented floriculture production which helps to insure duplication of product and increased sales revenue by virtue of decreased plant mortality.

#### **Tissue Culture Plant Materials Grants**

Procurement of hybrid tissue cultured plants for cut flower production have been initiated by the Agent project to expand the cut flower sector in Sri Lanka. Foreign and domestic production for certain species of cut flowers continues to fall short of international and domestic supply requirements.

Competent floriculture producers have been identified as worthy clients by the Agent project to enter into this strict cultured discipline.

#### **Tissue Culture Laboratory Equipment**

One Grant Agreement is currently under consideration for a partial laboratory set up to facilitate the production of tissue cultured Orchids and Anthuriums. This technology is a pioneer project, new to Sri Lanka and of enormous international impact.

The candidate, in cooperation with the AgEnt project is committed to the long range involvement of this viable sector growth area.

#### **Potential Importers**

The survey taken in the U.A.E. by this floriculture consultant from November 15, 1993 to November 22, 1993 indicate that the demand for finished floriculture products is far from realized. Though the import market of such a small country like the United Arab Emirates may seem insignificant, the overall demand for quality floriculture imports is constant and all indications lead to the larger import buying sector represented by a majority of Middle East countries.

#### **Potential Joint Ventures**

The consultant has been in contact with four individuals interested in either direct importer relationships or joint venture relationships. Six individual plant orders have been received by the consultant, one is in process and due to be shipped in sixty days, another is in the negotiation stage and the balance of inquiries are pending availability and price.

#### **New Plant species Introduction Grants**

Roughly thirty five plant varieties are currently under cultivation in Sri Lanka. This repetition of plant selection is duplicated by virtually every grower the consultant has interviewed. Three Grant Agreements are underway to enhance this limited selection by either introducing new plant varieties or by obtaining new stock materials by way of "in vitro" propagation. Five new species and eight varieties along with three improved stock resources are in the Grant Agreement process.

#### **T.A. Visits**

In addition to the normal T.A. assistance that the consultant performs, there has also been emphasis on reconstructing plant varieties into new and interesting forms and configurations. The majority of this work has centered around vertical specimens which can be an enticement to any buyer and can improve a product which may have lost it's former appeal.

#### **\* U.A.E. Samples Shipment**

Two grant agreements are in process to exhibit specific plant materials to potential clients in the U.A.E. This is in response to the preliminary market survey done by the consultant in November 1993.

Two additional grants will be forthcoming based on previous client arrangement with selected U.A.E. potential customers.

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